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DOMINIQUE-SILA KHAN and ZAWAHIR MOIR

THE LORD WILL MARRY THE VIRGIN EARTH: SONGS OF THE TIME TO COME

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A previous article entitled "The Coming of Nikalank Avatar. A Messianic Theme in Some Sectarian Traditions of North-western India" (D.S. Khan, 1997b) examined a few prophetic songs (*Āgam Vāṇīs*) found in the literary heritage of some sectarian movements of North India, such as the Nizār, Biśnoī and Jasnāthī Panths. These songs describe the various cataclysms and disasters which are expected at the end of the fourth cosmic Era or *Kali yuga* and the advent of a saviour named Nikalank Avatār. The issue of their origin has been raised and the songs have been compared to similar Hindu texts, such as the Kalki Purāṇa. Further, a rapprochement has been made with prophetic *ginān*s (devotional hymns) of the Nizari Ismaili tradition of the Subcontinent. A comparative study has now led us to the conclusion that the Rajasthani and Gujarati messianic *bhajans* have been inspired by the Ismaili hymns. A study of the organisation and rituals of these sects, as well as of their oral literature has also shown that the songs could be regarded as belonging to forgotten branches of the Nizari tradition. As a sequel to the previous article (D.S. Khan, 1997b) we will present here and briefly comment on some of these prophetic songs, which will be compared with similar fragments of Ismaili *ginān*s.

RAJASTHANI ĀGAM VĀṆĪS

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Attributed to Ramdev Pir (Version collected by S. Bishnoi, 1989: 237–238)

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Shyam will ride on a white horse, he will become incarnated (take *avatār*), the Nikalank king, O brother (Refrain).

1. He (is the one who) has created the nine lakhs of constellations, the moon and the sun,

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(as well as) the seven seas, hills and mountains, nine hundred rivers and lakes.

2. He has fixed (the earth) on the horns of the (divine) bull and put it on the lotus head of Vasuki (Vishnu's sacred cobra),
   He has fixed the sky without pillars, He is the all-powerful Diwan.
3. Nine crores of horses and elephants will bellow, earth and sky will tremble,
   Indra will shower a heavy rain like ambrosia, waters and lakes will be filled up.
4. He (is the one who) has created the various grains with six saps, vegetable life and mammals,
   of all the eighteen species of plants which bloom and fructify. He is the creator.
5. He (is the one who) has danced on the head of the snake-king after having fathomed the waters,
   He has filled with joy the house of the Gujari (milkmaid, Radha, the *gopī*), the one who is famous for his many skills.
6. He (is the one who) has churned the seven seas and the (great) ocean, using Mount Meru as a churning rod,
   He has made a rope with Vasuki and in the vessel he took the fourteen jewels.
7. The virtuous Lakshmana shot an arrow and thus killed Meghanada, having killed Ravana he conquered Lanka and ruined Mandodari.
8. Saturday, on the second day of the bright half of the month and on the third day He will establish his camp,
   with the five Pandavas and Karna, earth and mountains will tremble.
9. With the five (crores) Prahlad will come, with the seven, king Harishchandra,
   with the nine Yuddhisthira will come, and He Himself, Baba, will take the twelve with him.
10. Fifty crores of horses and elephants, thirty-crore of chariots will come, and the infantry will be countless, thus it will be an infinite *māyā*.
11. The army of Alam will come, the dust from the feet will hide the light of the sun,
    saints and heroes will fight face to face and will slay Kalinga.
12. Hanuman will accept the invitation (to the wedding), the one who is famous in the nine quarters of the word,
    in the north, the south, the east, the west, thousands of armies will be seen.

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13. The eighty-four Siddhas and the fifty-two Bhairavas will come with the nine Naths,
    Wise men knowing all kinds of Scriptures, Jangams and Jogis will come will the army of Shyam.
14. The angry Lord (Sahib) will crush his enemy to pieces, the cruel one (the barbarian, *mleccha, yavana*) will die,
    having received the *tilak* (royal consecration) He will sit on the throne, his glory will spread to the nine quarters of the world.
15. His horse will be white, white his club and white his saddle,
    the army of the Lord will be safe, Kali's armies will be defeated.
16. The (wedding) altar will be at Chittor, the (bridegroom's) camp at Delhi, the auspicious instruments will resound,
    Hindus and Turks will drink from the same cup, Baba will dispel their illusion.
17. Earth and sky will change, the moon and the sun will change,
    said Ramdev the Siddha, this is my prophecy.

Āgam Pramāṇ 2

Attributed to Ramdev Pir (S. Bishnoi, Ibid.: 241–242)

The conches will resound loudly, the horses will stretch their legs, the king Ramdev foretells the future, this will happen during the fourth Cosmic Era (*yuga*) (refrain).

1. From the western quarter the armies will appear, Alam himself will come,
   He will display a white flag, the dust (from the horses hooves) will hide the sun.
2. Wheat and pulses will be so expensive that each grain will be sold by the weight,
   the rivers will run out of water, drinking water will be weighed on scales (before being sold).
3. First the sinful Brahmins, then the merchants will be caught,
   and the Jogis who can find no excuse will be punished.
4. There will be such a wind that hills and rocks will fly,
   mountains will be blown away like (mere) cotton balls, Mount Meru will fly off.
5. The sun will burn with a thousand rays, so that the earth will have the colour of copper,
   as the oil boils in a cauldron, so waters will be heated.
6. One hundred thousand tons of iron will be melted to build a (special) chariot,

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to which the elephant Airavata will be yoked, while the cobra Vasuki will be used as reins.

7. One hundred and twenty five thousand tons of iron will be melted with which an oil press will be made,
   unjust warriors will be put into it and oil will be extracted from them.
8. This (oil) will serve to light five hundred and thousand lamps,
   and by the light of these lamps and torches the Lord will put on his wedding turban ornament.
9. The (bridegroom's) camp will be in Delhi, the bridal altar established at Chittorgarh,
   riding a white Hansla horse (a particular breed) the Lord will wed Meghri.
10. The goose and the heron will become black, the cockoo and the crow will turn white,
    Alam will roam to the four corners (of the world), the Rishis will be witnesses.
11. The truthful Nijdharmīs[2] will serve Hari,
    Ramdev tells this prophecy which will come true in the fourth Era.

Joṛo Kalang Sāthi . . . (a prophetic song from the Biśnoī oral tradition)

1. Vishnu will be face to face with Kalinga.
2. He will create a dust storm and winds.
3. He will establish his throne in Delhi and Multan.[3]
4. The earth will be as if made of copper, the sound of steps will resound.
5. The sun will shine with a thousand rays and will burn.
6. He will protect the righteous ones and destroy the others.
7. Clouds will gather and produce a thick shade.
8. Riding Duldul he will become infuriated.
9. Holding a triple-edged sword Vishnu will fight with its help.
10. Nikalank will come and bring his army from the north-western quarter.
11. With the fifty-six crores of Yadavas the god with the plough (Balarama) will come.
12. Taking with him five crores Prahlad will arrive.
13. Harishchandra with seven and with Rohidas.
14. With the five Pandavas Ahmad (the Prophet Muhammad) will come.
15. Riding a bull Mahadeva will come.
16. Riding the divine goose (*hansa*) Brahma will come.
17. Seated on the back of Garuda Vishnu will come.

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18. With one thousand and eighty-eight Siddhas Nemnath will come.
19. With one thousand billion and eighteen Angad will come.
20. With the Siddhas and Sadhs of the four *yugas* Gorakh will come.
21. He will call the *vīrs* (Bhairavas) along with the sixty-four *yoginīs*.
22. With the thundering sound of drums he will fight the last battle.
23. Having broken Kalinga's head he will destroy the earth.
24. He will come to wed Vasudha Kunvari (the Virgin Earth).
25. The Mahdi Shah Salem[4] will join their hands (or Shah Salem will dye their hands with henna?).
26. Having uttered the Atharvan Veda[5] he will perform the wedding.
27. Innumerable Raises and Sayyids will be invited with the others.
28. With the thirty-three crores Prahlad will participate.
29. Vishnu will have *āratī* performed by the hand of the Goddess.
30. Countless crores of deities will arrive in heavenly chariots.
31. The one who helps us to cross the ocean of births, Narasimha, will come.
32. Having reached Prayag, he will establish the Vaikuntha.
33. Said Lakha the Sadh, this prophecy will come true.

Daylamī Āradh (Fragments from a Rajasthani oral version attributed to Devayat Pandit)

1. (. . .) There will be nineteen lakhs of Qazi Korans, eighteen lakhs of grammars, eighteen lakhs of Puranas, thirteen lakhs of different cults of the Lord,
2. The four Vedas will be manifested, the fifth Veda is secret, tell me, O Swami Raja, when will this secret Veda be revealed? the *pāyal* will be the *amṛt* (. . .)[6] the country is Daylam, the Baba is Alam, the wife is Fatima[7] (. . .).
3. He (the Lord) will cause a golden throne to be made, which will be sixty-nine (?) high, and He, the eternal king will sit on it and He has neither mother nor father (. . .) of all the twelve months (it will take place) in the month of Asoj, the day will be Saturday, the date *Brahmā mālā (bīj)*, when they will worship the Lord, when he will write the account of each ascetic order (. . .).
4. Tell me, O Swami Raja, what will you do with them? He (you) will cause an iron oil press to be made to press one lakh and six thousand brains of bad and sinful persons, oil will be extracted from their skulls and with this oil ninety nine crores of lamps will be made for the army of Alam Raja,
5. They will light up together with the five crores accompanying Prahlad, the seven crores accompanying Raja Harishchandra, and

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the twelve crores accompanying Balchand.[8] The twelve celibrate *panths* will go and celebrate their own wedding by the grace of Alam.

6. On the shore of the seven seas the Kayam Raja will summon others and his family members and he will give them a banquet. He will make a huge earring for the bad ones.
7. At that time salt and water will be sold by the weight, there will be only one kind of cereal, the cardinal directions will be reversed, the *prasād* will be of saffron.
8. When four hours (only) will remain before the universe (is destroyed) the *āk* tree will give mangoes, the margosa tree (*nīm*) raisins, the *ker* bush will give *pān* leaves measuring one hand and a half, the Peepal will give flowers weighing one kilogram,
9. Gold will give a pleasant smell, Kalinga will plough (the earth), it will be necessary to churn the milk of the she-camel and of the she-elephant. He (the Lord) will give children to sterile women,
10. Having summoned Balchand he will make him a firm promise. The Swami Raja will cause everybody to eat and vomit all the grains that have been stored on the earth (the meaning is indeed rather obscure), bringing them all to one opinion (mind), and gathering all this together he will give a banquet.
11. In the East Meghri Rani from Sovangarh (Chittor) will come, the Eternal Virgin, on the *Bij* day, and the Lord will wed her.
12. Nar Satagur[9] thus spoke and told without discrimination (this) Daylami Aradh, Sahni (his disciple) repeated it with his own mouth, (then) Pandit Devayat wrote it at the court of God, Sati Punjalde is the witness, so Daylami Aradh is completed, while sitting on the *gaddī* Pandit Devayat Maharaj has recited it.

NIZARI ISMAILI GINANS

Ginān 54 by Pir Shams (Collection, vol. II: 60–61)

1. The Lord will marry the Virgin Earth, it is the marriage of the Lord of the three worlds.
   On that day the ritual of *ghaṭ*[10] will be set up, and the deceitful will not come near.
2. O reflecting one, be aware that in the world we have an abode, recognise our two disciples, Vimras and Surbhan.
3. Though called disciples, they have been with us in all the *yugas* (ages),
   In the *Kali yuga* they will surely appear together, know this!

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4. We will come to dwell where the *ghaṭ* ceremony takes place, with incense and lamps making fragrance and much brightness.
5. In the *Kali yuga*, there is much worship of holy water, of the vessel for nectar and its fragrance, but only where our disciples become manifest, will the full ceremony be established.
6. When the disciples establish the *ghaṭ* for devotion, Pir Shams says this, that they will dwell in heavenly abode.

Ginān 50 by Pir Shams (Ibid: 57–59)

1. Listen O brother believer, the times are strange and the *Kali yuga* has arrived with its falseness,
2. Disciples will fight with their Pirs, sons will beat their fathers,
3. Beware O brother believer, be vigilant, be intelligent, the end approaches,
4. O my brother, the times of the *Kali yuga* are hard, the liar is raised high,
5. Then even the sincere will abandon truth, and even the ripened fruits will dry up and wither,
6. The rains of the skies will not rain, in the earth no crop will prosper.
7. Both mothers and daughters will quarrel, and call each other co-wife (step-wife),
8. Friends become enemies, even though they eat and drink and sleep together,
9. The mother-in-law will rise to get water, (while) the daughter-in-law sits to (enjoy) food,
10. Master will be oppressed by servant, O Sir, such times have come,
11. Two relatives will quarrel between themselves, and will tear each other apart,
12. Wife will beat husband, O Sir, see the *tamāśā* (drama) before you,
13. And Hindus and Muslims will mingle, sitting and eating food together,
14. Both Mullahs and Brahmins will slaughter cows, in their ways of dealing they will quarrel,
15. The poor will bear affliction on their heads and be caught in doubt,
16. The hour of the *Kali yuga* is declared now, O Sir, such times have arrived,
17. Rarely will there be any who are pious and ascetic, householders will be celibate,
18. The chaste will have no place, the less deserving will rule in the land,

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19. Then the fires will pour like rains, and the earth will blaze with burning,
20. On such a day, the tempests will blow with such force that mountains and rocks will fly on the wind,
21. O Sir, all this will come to pass: and the learned will bear the sin on their heads,
22. Not even the celibate mendicant will know what to expect,
23. The waters of the seven seas will recede, the creatures of the deep will be destroyed,
24. Sun and moon will both disappear, there will be dimness and darkness above,
25. Strong places will shake and buildings will fall, the earth will be watery and fluid,
26. Within the space of twelve furlongs will burn but a solitary light,
27. The whole earth will be waste, none will remain there,
28. Only Allah himself will survive, there will be only one Lord then!
29. Our Master's kingdom will be as near as a hand's length,
30. Pir Shams *Kalandar* has said thus: our Master has many wonders.

Ginān 8 by Pir Satgur Nur (Collection, vol. III: 118–119)

1. O dear brother, sprinkle saffron colour on the golden bed, O dear brother, sprinkle saffron colour on the ruler of *Arab deś* (country) whose marriage is imminent.
2. O dear brother, it is the invitation of the bridegroom Naklank, who has travelled in twenty-four countries; O the wedding!
3. O dear brother, everyone is offering plates of gold, bringing them into piles on the throne: O the wedding!
4. O dear brother, heap the plates with rubies and pearls, O dear brother, let us go and greet the ruler of the fourteen worlds; O the wedding!
5. O dear brother, hang coconuts over the entrance, O dear brother, let virtuous damsels sing happy choruses: O the wedding!
6. O dear brother, let us plead with the progeny of the Divine Lord: Lord, come with four Vedas speedily: O the wedding!
7. O dear brother, the musical instruments play in concert, the drums are beating *ḍamak ḍamak*: O the wedding!
8. O dear brother, the Lord comes also with the army, bedecked, the talks will take place openly in the wedding crowd: O the wedding!
9. The Virgin Earth pleads: listen with open ears O my lover: O the wedding!

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10. O dear brother, deck with all the colours the throne where the royal bridegroom sits: O the wedding!
11. O dear brother, spread a canopy that pleases my heart, there I am to wed my valiant Master: O the wedding!
12. O dear brother, cover the canopy with fragrant flowers and plants, the abode is filled of musk: O the wedding!
13. O dear brother, we shall wed as husband and wife: O dear brother, the Divine Guide (*Gur Brahmā*) will read the Vedas there: O the wedding!
14. O dear brother, the golden bracelet looks goodly on the Lord. It is also the Divine Symbol: O the wedding!
15. O dear brother, the crown of his head is studded with diamonds, the Lord's earrings glitter in his ears: O the wedding!
16. O dear brother, Husband and Wife are wedded fully, it is the Lord master's wedding: O the wedding!
17. O dear brother, Nur Satgur says: the Divine Guide has sung the wedding song: O the wedding!

Ginān 16 by Pir Sadruddin (Collection, vol. I: 16–17)

1. For those who truly adore the Lord (*Shāh*),
   Ali the Master of the Zulfiqar[11] will appear,
2. The earth will yield her hidden treasures, her wealth,
   The Lord on the Duldul horse will carry a whip,
3. The bitter seas will turn sweet, such wonders will the Lord perform!
4. The Peepal tree and creepers will burst into flowers of grain,
   And the Lord will cause the elephant to give milk,
5. While snakes and scorpions grow and play together,
   The Lord will make partridges and falcons feed together,
6. And the wolf and the goat will graze together,
   There none will attack or kill each other,
7. Together cows and tigers will graze,
   My Lord will dispense justice (*adāl*) thus:
8. To devotees, the salvation – and the demons he will split and burn,
   The Divine Lord will establish Vedas,
9. Pir Sadruddin says: Hearken, O band of believers!
   Assuredly the king (*rājā*) will come to the disciples' abode.

Ginān 39 by Pir Sadruddin (Ibid: 43–47)

1. The True Guide (Satguru) says: 'listen, O you, my believers,
   'the Royal Master (*sāhib rājā*) has commanded thus:

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2. Keep in your heart the truth of the faith, for the day of Judgment is declared,
3. The day of Judgment approaches, listen and take note of its reality,
4. Know the truth of the Royal Master's commands, and hearing those commands, take note!
5. The Royal Master has fixed the day of Judgment long before the cosmic time of eight *lakhs* of years,
6. Take heed, O my believers, and why wander? – that day has come very near,
7. O my believers, that day has come nearer, the Royal Master will appear riding from the West,
8. Many deities (*devas*) from the beginning of time will meet, the Lord will lead many armies,
9. Those armies will meet all the deities, and will march into the Subcontinent (*Jambudvīpa*),
10. With devotion, the Lord will bear the light of the Prophet, in Arabian garb,
11. The demon Kalingo dwells in the direction known as Chinab (*Nagarī*) City,[12]
12. There, he too has many armies, they too appear riding together,
13. Then both armies shall fight there, deities and demons will fall upon each other,
14. Swords will clatter upon swords and the demon Kalingo will fall there,
15. In killing the demon, the Lord will subdue all, the Royal master will bring about the day of rejoicing,
16. The Lord Master will wed the Virgin Earth and let the believers rule,
17. For a *lakh* and a quarter of years, and the great day (*mahadin*) will be declared,
18. Then will be the Settlement of sins and virtues, then will the master reckon every small thing,
19. That day will be as long as half a *lakh* of years, on that day all creatures will be weighed,
20. Their hidden sins will be exposed, thirty-three crores of deities will also appear together,
21. The sun will heat with countless rays, and a rain of fire will fall,
22. Waves of fire will roll from the skies, like torrential rain,

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23. All vegetation, all rocks and mountains, burned many times, will turn into charcoal,
24. And the water of the rivers will fall, and the land will be barren,
25. The shape of earth will change such as it will resemble copper,
26. The sinners will burn in the brazier of fire, there mankind will be subdued,
27. My Lord Master will pitch his tent and from his throne will check every last thing.
28. The master will inquire of every sin in detail, and then the sinners will burn.
29. Servant, master, young and old, all will be as one.
30. The Lord of Resurrection (*Kāyam*) will be the Judge, and there he will assume Arabian form.
31. My Lord will accept no petition, will do as his heart inclines.
32. Those who have accepted the Guide Master but have not participated in the community (*ghaṭ*) nor done any good deed to accompany them,
33. O friends, their bodies will burn like a wick in a lamp.
34. Believers will slander believers, know this truly, such people will most surely go to hell.
35. O friends, their bodies will crumple like paper under pressure.

36–37. When believers do not participate in the community (*ghaṭ*), and indulge in drinking wine and smoking tobacco, O my believers, know this truly, such people will most surely go to hell.

38. Surely will the sinners be caught, and none will protect them when they are beaten.
39. Hammer blows will fall on their heads, sounding like the thunder of a host of clouds.
40. The Master will punish the sinners by setting their heads upside down,
41. The brain of the skull will protrude through the ears – thus will the Lord examine every small thing.
42. Eight crores of iron bars will there be rolling, and these will be inserted into the body's veins.
43. None will care to ask of your pain or your pleasure, there will be no father, no mother, no brother or sister.
44. Moving the hands will break the bones, no one will be your companion,
45. Whatever good deeds or virtues your perform, those only will stand by you,

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46. The one who acts by paying tithes (*dasond*), he will have hope in the Lord Master.
47. For him the final day will pass effortlessly, he will sit with the Lord Master.

48–49. The believers who do not participate in the community (*ghaṭ*) and fix their love on the world, their every sin will be endlessly examined, skin will be pinched with pincers,

50–51. The believers who worship at others' temples and stray on others' pilgrimages, such people will be questioned by the Royal Master and will suffer strokes of the hammer,

52. O my believers, listen to the reality of the great day, pain and sorrow will both weigh heavily.
53. After hearing this scripture you must speak truth, and ever after earn merit,
54. O my believers, always meet in the community (*ghaṭ*), where both the Lord and Master come,
55. By meeting in the community (*ghaṭ*), you can settle your account of sins which the Master scrutinizes on the day of judgment.
56. Listen to these teachings and act truthfully, my brothers, do meditate.
57. The Lord has spoken of it for ages past, you must certainly act now,
58. Act truthfully by the *Satpanth* (true path), and perform good deeds by day and night.
59. Such a *ginan* Pir Sadruddin has said: O all the community, keep your faith!

The Bridegroom . . . (Ginān by Pir Sadruddin, Nanjiani: 198–200)

1. The bridegroom is in the Subcontinent (*Jambudvīpa*), O the Lord Bridegroom comes to the Subcontinent! Many thousand of greetings, the Lord bridegroom has arrived!
2. The king is pleased, the pious one is happy, those who adore single-mindedly, they surely gain.
3. Here is the Master's wedding party, they stand aside, they ask for the queen immaculate,
4. The Lord's wedding party, they stand aside with love, for they are not spoiled by *Kali yuga*.
5. The pious Harchand (Harishchandra) comes with thousands of his horsemen,
6. The white horse, astride the white horse: all have ropes tied strongly,

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7. All thirty-three crores deities (*devas*) meet, the true deities Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva,
8. They meet, they meet the five pious ones (the Pandavas) who obey the Lord Master.
9. Gracious are the gracious ones, for in their hearts resides the royal Master,
10. Wherever those who worship the Lord are delivered, O the service of the Lord!
11. The astrologers pore over their charts – when is the Lord's wedding to come?
12. The second night (*bīj*), the Friday night, is the hour of the Lord's wedding.
13. Eight lakhs of rocks, and pillars girt with garlands, the Lord has built all that,
14. Four pious, truly virtuous Women Saints give gifts and congratulate the Lord,
15. Countless crores of deities prophesy in auspicious songs, offering joy to the Lord.
16. This couple come together as husband and wife, in the high presence of five crores deities,
17. They join the couple together, O the seven crores of fearless royal lords.
18. The redeemed king will redeem the pious children, O the nine crores of deities,
19. But with the twelve (crores), the Royal Master (*Shāh*) Nizar will join together the community (*ghaṭ*) in merit,
20. Spread flowers on this path, this path on which the royal Master will tread
21. Invite four pious Women Saints, Mata Kunta and Sati Draupadi,
22. Invite the queen, wife of Harchand, who will knot the royal Master's tie,
23. This Tara, the star, will knit the rosary, and sun and moon will kiss the Royal Master.
24. The skies will crowd round the marriage square and grace the Lord's seat and his bride the Earth,
25. The Royal Groom, the Royal Bridegroom climbs the adorned bed,
26. Come, let us go where the Lord's party pauses to witness it,
27. There is no single eye that does not gaze on this groom,
28. The Royal Lord of the three Worlds will wed and will fulfil the hopes and desires of the community (*ghaṭ*),

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29. Pir Sadruddin has said this: worship, O believers, with consistent mind!

Except for the texts transcribed in Bishnoi (1989), we have drawn the Rajasthani messianic songs directly from the oral traditions. Our informants have been the untouchable Kāmaḍiyās (in this case the priest of Ramdev Pir at Pushkar) and the Biśnoīs living in the area of Bikaner.

As far as the Ismaili hymns are concerned, the texts used come from the printed editions the details of which are given in the references.

All these religious songs, whether the Nizarpanthi *bhajans* or the *ginān*s of the Khojas, pose a problem of authorship, as is the case with the medieval Sant literature (Hawley, 1988). It is probable that the *ginān*s (and also the Nizarpanthi *bhajans*) have been composed by later disciples, the signature (*chāp, banitā*) of the Pir or the saint being meant to give authority to the text (Asani, 1991). On the other hand, as exemplified in the *Daylamī Āradh*, even if the actual text was composed by a disciple, one can imagine that the initial inspiration has indeed been the Pir or the saint whose message the devotee has expressed in his poem (see note 9).

In Āgam Praman 1 by Ramdev Pir, refrain and verse 15, Nikalank, who is identified with Kalki, is seen riding a white horse, as in Sadruddin's Ginān, *The Bridegroom*, verse 6. This horse is none other than Duldul, as in the Bisnoi *Joṛo Kalang Sathī*, verse 8, to be compared with Sadruddin's Ginān n° 16, verse 2. As Dr Chlodwig H. Werba has remarked (personal communication), the name *kalkin-* is derived from the Vedic *karka-* (and its dialectical *l-* variant) meaning 'characterized by (the possession of) a white horse'. Here we have an interesting encounter between the Islamic tradition in which Ali is shown riding a white mount named Duldul, and the Hindu myth of Kalki with his white horse. The Lord is said to come from the "western quarter" (Ramdev's Agam 2, v. 1), exactly as in Sadruddin's Ginān 39, v. 7. This is an allusion to the fact that at that time, the living Imam of the Nizaris resided in Iran which is, of course, located to the West of the Subcontinent.

In the same Āgam 1, verse 8, and in *Daylamī Āradh*, v. 3, the wedding is said to take place on Saturday, the second day of the bright half of the month (*bij*), as in Ginān *The Bridegroom*, verse 12. The Lord will marry the Virgin Earth (*Vasundhā Kunvarī*) in the Biśnoī Āgam v. 24, as in Sadruddin's Ginān 39, v. 16 (*Viśva Kunvarī*) and in the Ginān 54 by Pir Shams where it is said "The Lord will marry the Virgin Earth". In one unique Ginān of Pir Satgur Nur, the actual preparations for the Lord's wedding to the Virgin Earth are described. The five Pandavas

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(Ramdev's Āgam 1, v. 8) are mentioned among those who will escort the bridegroom, as well as Harchand/Harishchandra), in v. 9: this is to be compared to the above mentioned Ginān (the Bridegroom), verses 8 and 5. Finally, he will slay the demon Kalingo personifying the *Kali yuga* (see D.S. Khan, 1997b: 414, 416, 419–420), as in the Biśnoī text, v. 23, and in Sadruddin's Ginān 39, v. 11.

In verse 16 of Ramdev's Āgam 1, it is predicted that "Hindus and Turks will drink from the same cup", while in the Gujarati text *Mālpavāḍo* belonging to the same tradition (Sinclair Stevenson, 1930: 85), it is written "Hindus and Muhammadans will sit down and take food together", very much as in Pir Shams' Ginān n° 50, v. 13. "Drinking a cup together" generally means taking initiation into a Sufi order (but here into the Nizari sect), while the idea of partaking of the same meal may have both a positive and negative interpretation: in the Gujarati untouchable tradition the mixing of castes is represented as a result of the triumphal advent of the saviour Nikalank, while in Pir Shams it is, curiously enough, described as a consequence of the evils of *Kali yuga*. Needless to say, the abolition of caste barriers is one of the ideal values of the egalitarian Satpanth and Nizārpanth.

The various calamities and climatic disasters of the *Kali yuga* are described in Ramdev's Āgam 2, v. 4–5, in the Biśnoī text v. 4–5, in the Gujarati *Mālpavāḍo* (Sinclair Stevenson: 85), exactly in the same terms as in Sadruddin's Ginān 39, v. 21 and 25: the storm, the burning sun, the earth which will have the colour of copper. The rarity or quasi absence of crops and water are indicated in Ramdev's Āgam 2, v. 2, which can be compared with the prediction of Shams's Ginan 1, v. 6. Other "abnormalities" of that Era are also alluded to, such as the necessity of using elephant's milk (*Daylamī Āradh*, v. 9 and Sadruddin's Ginān 16, v. 4). In the same way the punishments of the day of Judgment where every sin will be taken into account and weighed are indicated in the above-mentioned Āgam, v. 7–8, and are similar to what is found in Sadruddin's Ginān 39, v. 39 and 42.

By juxtaposing the messianic songs of both the Nizarpanthi and the Khoja traditions, one can clearly see that, despite some differences, they share the same themes and convey the same atmosphere. Considering the fact that the Nizari Ismaili tradition of the Subcontinent has always been rather secretive, this similarity is probably not due to mere exchanges and mutual influences: it is more logical to conclude that the Nizarpanthis, very much like the Imamshahis or Satpanthis (Ivanow, 1936), are one of offshoots of the Ismaili tradition.

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NOTES

[1] Similar texts exist which are ascribed to the same or different authors. One Rajasthani oral version is attributed to the Nāth Jogī Matsyendranath. For written versions, see Gohil, 1994, pp. 17–32. The oral versions in Rajasthan are mainly collected from the untouchable Meghval members of the Nizārpanth and the Kāmaḍyās of Rāmdev.

[2] In the Rajasthani and Gujarati traditions the secret Nizārpanth is referred to by various names, among others it is called Nij or Nijiā Dharm.

[3] The region of Multan (with the city called Multan and the nearby Ucch) now in Pakistan (former Sind, present Punjab) has been the centre of the Ismaili mission (*dawa*) in the Subcontinent. Delhi, as the capital of the earlier Sultanate and then of the Mughal empire, represents a strategic point for the ambitious Nizari *dawa*.

[4] Maybe an allusion to the living Imam of the Nizaris, Islam Shah also called Shah Salim (fifteenth century), a reference which could give an idea of the period during which the first oral version of this song was composed or point to the time when the local community now referred to as Biśnoī had been converted.

[5] The fourth Veda which, in the Nizari tradition, is in fact the secret fifth Veda, sometimes called *Athar Ved* to distinguish it from the fourth one, is one of the names of the Nizari Ismaili religious message in the Subcontinent, represented by the ginanic heritage and by the whole tradition of the Imams and Pirs. See Daylami Aradh, v. 2. and Gohil, 1994: 57.

[6] *Pāyal* is here the Rajasthani equivalent of *pāval*, the specific name of the Holy Water in the Nizari tradition of the Subcontinent.

[7] During the first period of the Nizari mission the centre was located in the famous fortress of Alamut, situated in the region of Daylam, Iran. Alam is one of the names of Allah, and, of course Fatima is the famous daughter of the Prophet Muhammad who became the wife of Ali, the first Imam of our Era according to the Ismaili tradition.

[8] For the series of the five, seven, nine and twelve crores, see Shackle and Moir, 1992: 170. In the Khoja Nizari tradition it is the missionary Pir Sadruddin (d. 1416) who will save the remaining twelve crores of devotees, while in the Rajasthani and Gujarati tradition this role is given to one Balchand. Sadruddin is said to have used Hindu names while working among the Hindu converts, for example Sahadev and Harchand (and maybe Balchand). According to another version (Z. Moir, 1999), Sahadev, however and then maybe Balchand, would be a different figure, perhaps a local missionary acting under Sadruddin's order.

[9] It is interesting to note here that the original authorship of this song is ascribed to the famous Nizari missionary Nur Satgur (twelfth century?) to whom many Ismaili *ginans* are ascribed. See one below and Shackle and Moir, 1992. According to this Rajasthani version of *Daylami Aradh*, the text has been transmitted through a chain of disciples, among whom are Sahni and Devayat. This could throw some light on the problem of authorship of the *ginans*. For example, one could surmise that the "real" authors of the songs were the (originally) Hindu disciples who have put into a poetic form the discourse of their spiritual guide. Devayat Pir, also called Devayat Pandit is famous in the Rajasthani and Gujarati traditions for his prophetic songs, see Gohil, Ibid.: 52–70. Another famous name is "Sahadev Joshi" (Ibid.: 107) whom the Gujarati Nizarpanthis do not hesitate to identify with the Khoja Pir Sadruddin.

[10] Allusion to the *ghaṭ-pāt* ceremony, the regular Nizari ritual.

[11] Name of Ali's sacred double-edged sword.

[12] Maybe near the Chenab river, one of the tributaries of the Indus, which indeed flows near Multan, in Punjab.

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